



Minnesota Genealogist

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Minnesota Genealogist

MGS Information

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MGS and Branch volunteers staff the library and provide research help. To volunteer at the MGS Library and Research Center, call 651-455-9057, or email Kathy Lund at mlund8307@yahoo.com

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The monthly *Minnesota Families* newsletter is delivered digitally. Please make sure we have your current email address.

Quarterly Journal of the Minnesota Genealogical Society

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The Managing Editor invites readers to submit articles, including genealogy research articles, genealogical source guides, family history research experience stories, family history heritage travel stories, book reviews, and genealogy software and technology reviews. Research articles and family history research or travel stories should have some connection to Minnesota or the Upper Midwest. Preference is given to MGS members, but non-member submissions are welcome. Submit articles digitally in file formats readable in Microsoft Word. Complete guidelines for writers are available at www.mngs.org.

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MGS Library and Research Center

The Minnesota Genealogical Society Library and Research Center is your Genealogy Help Place, providing a friendly environment for family history research and genealogy learning. The library features free access to Ancestry.com, Irish Origins and EmiWeb (Swedish records).

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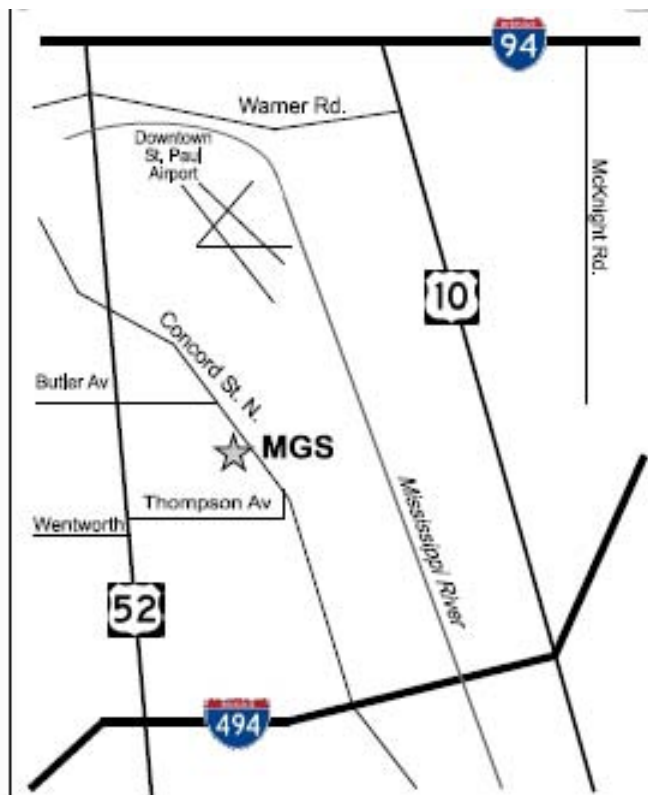
Wed.: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Thurs.: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. & 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

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Check the MGS website for scheduling updates. The library closes during severe weather events.

Admission is free to MGS members and members of MGS Branches and Affiliate organizations. MGS requests a \$10 admission donation from non-members. Free WiFi is available for laptop users.



For schedule information for MTC bus route 71 to MGS, go to <<http://www.metrotransit.org/maps-schedules.aspx>>

From the Editor's Desk

My wife enjoys reading mystery novels. They don't tempt me at all. Yet I love family history research because I like solving mysteries. Perhaps the difference is that my wife's novels are fiction, while family history is non-fiction.

Genealogy and family history research are like a time-travel version of reality TV. We mentally transport ourselves back to our ancestors' time and try to figure out where they came from, what they did and where they went. We can see the places our ancestors lived in our mind's eye. We can almost see them sitting in the parlor, planting a crop or crossing the Mississippi on a ferry.

When we start our family history research, we commonly want to go back as far and as fast as we can. We want to find the immigrant ancestor and track the family back to the home country. We might dream of making a connection to European royalty or even Charlemagne – a noble goal, if not terribly practical or realistic.

My advice to family history researchers is to slow down and enjoy the scenery along the way. Get beyond filling in the blanks in family group sheets and learn as much as possible about the lives of your ancestors. Keep your eye on the ultimate goal – finding great-great-grandpa's parents and grandparents – but don't be afraid to take a genealogical side-trip.

As an example, I offer my article about Elizabeth Fawkner of Montrose, Iowa. Elizabeth was the second (of three) wives of my wife's great-great-grandfather, James C. Fawkner. My wife is descended from James' third wife, and my ultimate goal is to identify his paternal grandparents.

This family has produced mysteries and drama to match any mystery novel I've read. I got hooked on Elizabeth when I discovered that her daughter Ida had been a student at the Indiana School for the Deaf, where sadly she was at the center of a notorious 1870s sex scandal (a story to be told another time). My efforts to learn more about Elizabeth and Ida introduced me to Oliver Dresser – a shadowy character with connections to the Mormon migration from Illinois to Utah. My side-trip into the lives of Elizabeth and Oliver has given me a richer understanding of the Fawkner family than I ever would have gained by rushing back to the previous generation.

Also in this issue, Cathi Weber shares another kind of research detour. Puzzled by a middle-age gap in the life of her grandfather, she broadened her Parmer family search to a Palmer family that seemed to match, except that her grandfather was missing. She followed one lead to another until she found the missing link. Her grandfather had left his family in California, returned to Iowa and made a small change in his name and birth date.

Georgetta Hickey's article comes to us as the winner of the 2011 MGS Michael Clark Family History Writing Award. She does a masterful job of explaining tangled property transactions that helped unravel family relationships. Congratulations, Georgetta!

I hope you enjoy this final issue of 2011. Here's wishing you a Happy Genealogical New Year!

J. H. Fonkert, CG
Managing Editor

MGS Education Committee Presents...

Genealogical education is a centerpiece of MGS' mission. The MGS Education Committee offers classes for family history researchers of all experience levels.

TOPICS IN GENEALOGY AT MHS

This series is targeted to seasoned researchers who want to upgrade their problem-solving skills and expand their knowledge of more specialized sources. Formerly known as the "MGS Intermediate Genealogy Course," the series is co-sponsored by the Minnesota Genealogical Society and the Minnesota Historical Society. All classes are 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (with a break) at the Minnesota History Center, 345 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul.

January 21 **Topics in Genealogy at MHS**, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
- *The Internet as a Genealogy Tool*
- *Think INSIDE the Box—Creative Database Searches*
Instructors: Sheila Northrop and Mary Wickersham

February 18 **Topics in Genealogy at MHS**, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
Naturalization--the Process, the Records, the Law
Instructor: Tom Rice, CG

March 10 **Topics in Genealogy at MHS**, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
Family History Research Focus on Women
Alice Eichholz, Ph.D., CG

April 21 **Topics in Genealogy at MHS**, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
Federal and State Census Records—Introducing the 1940 Census
Instructor: Lois Abromitis Mackin, Ph.D.

May 19 **Topics in Genealogy at MHS**, 10 a.m., MN History Center
- *Using Military and Pension Records to Research Your Civil War Ancestor*
- *Using Homestead Records and Other Public Land Records for Family History*
Instructor: J. H. Fonkert, CG

GENEALOGY 101 – March 17, 24, 31 and April 14, 21; 1-4 p.m., MGS Library and Research Center, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul. Formerly known as the "MGS Beginning Genealogy Course," this five-session series is a how-to course for beginners of all ages. The team-taught course features hands-on, individualized learning exercises.

MORE COURSES

Classes meet at the MGS Library and Research Center, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul.

January 22 – DAR Workshop, 1 p.m., MGS Library and Research Center. Instructors: Fran Stachour, Lois Abromitis Mackin, Jennifer de Fiebre

January 28 – Genealogy Computer Lab, 10 a.m., MGS library and Research Center. Instructor: Cathi Weber

February 5 – Photography for Genealogists, 1:30 p.m., MGS Library and Research Center. Instructors: Bergetta F. Monroe and Tom Peters

March 3 – Zotero – The Internet Researcher's Swiss Army Knife, 10 a.m., MGS Library and Research Center. Instructor: Tom Rice, CG

March 17 – Beyond Obits—Finding Family History in Newspapers, 10:30 a.m., MGS Library and Research Center. Instructor: J. H. Fonkert, CG

April 17 & 24 and May 1 – Publishing Your Family History, 6–8 p.m., MGS library. Instructor: Bergetta F. Monroe

May 12 – Planning a Genealogy Trip, 10 a.m., MGS library. Instructor: Cathi Weber

The Cottage on Lake Minnetonka

by Georgetta Hickey

Winston Churchill is credited with saying, "Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." Often our study of family history and the stories of our ancestors provide unanticipated life lessons. If we pay attention to the details, we can benefit from the missteps of earlier generations.

In 2007, my husband Bill saw an obituary in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* for his deceased father's cousin, George Hickey. By that time, I'd done enough family history research to know George was the last-surviving Hickey of his generation. I later accompanied Bill to the funeral home visitation; when he introduced himself to George's daughter, her first words were, "Oh, it was your father who got the cottage on Lake Minnetonka that my dad was supposed to inherit!"

This comment didn't come as a complete surprise. When I'd started to research Hickey family history, I'd found a carbon copy of the "Last Will and Testament of William Hickey."¹ I'd been puzzled by one of its clauses. Based on the funeral home comment, strong feelings remained, despite the passage of more than 60 years and the deaths of everyone directly involved.

The Family of Patrick and Julia Hickey

The author of the will, William Hickey, was born 17 November 1866 in rural Ramsey County², the seventh of nine children of Patrick Hickey and Julia (Ryan) Hickey.³ William's next-older siblings were twins Patrick and Julia, born 25 January 1865⁴ and named after their parents. William and Patrick and their sister Julia would play major roles in the story of the Lake Minnetonka cottage.

Their parents were born in Ireland – Patrick in County Tipperary and Julia in County Limerick.⁵ The paths of Patrick Hickey and Julia Ryan crossed in Rock County, Wisconsin, where they married on 13 April 1856.⁶ Shortly thereafter, Patrick and Julia moved to Ramsey County, Minnesota, and their first child was born there in 1857.⁷ The 1870 and 1880 censuses show Patrick and Julia living in Vivian Township, Waseca County, Minnesota.⁸ Patrick was a farmer, and Julia cared for their growing family. Patrick Hickey died in Vivian Township of heart disease at 64 years of age on 19 February 1884 and



(Uncle) William Hickey and (Nephew) William V. Hickey with a string of fish from Lake Minnetonka

was buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in Waseca County.⁹

An entry in the *Waseca Radical* reports Julia and her family moving to Minneapolis about four years later:

"The Hickey family, of Vivian, came in from that town Friday and left for Minneapolis Saturday. They expect to make that place their future home. They have lived long in Vivian, and it must seem like going from home for Mrs. Hickey, but the young people are eager to encounter the world, and think they can do better elsewhere which we trust and hope they can."¹⁰

The 1890 Minneapolis City Directory recorded "Julia Hickey (widow Patrick)" living at 705 N. 5th with seven children, including William and Patrick and "Miss Julia."¹¹ The two oldest Hickey daughters, Mary and

Margaret, had already married and left home before the family's move to Minneapolis.¹²

Julia and her unmarried seven children, ranging in age from 29 to 40, were still living together in Minneapolis in 1900.¹³ By that time, son Patrick was a Minneapolis fireman, which would be his career for 32 years.¹⁴

Patrick married Catherine Quinn in Minneapolis on 25 September 1906,¹⁵ and they had two children: William Victor, born 8 November 1907,¹⁶ and Julia Rose, born 21 October 1909.¹⁷ William Victor would become the father of my husband, William Patrick. There would be three generations with members bearing the names 'William Hickey' and 'Julia Hickey,' just to keep things challenging for subsequent researchers of the Hickey family's history!

Mother/grandmother Julia Hickey died in Minneapolis on 9 July 1908 at the age of 83 years¹⁸ and was buried beside her husband in St. Mary's Cemetery near Waseca.¹⁹

The 1910 census shows four Hickey siblings – James (age 49), Julia (age 45), William (age 43), and Michael (age 39) – living together at 1516 North Lyndale.²⁰ William was employed as a Minneapolis policeman, which would be his career for over 20 years.²¹

By 1920, the youngest brother (Michael), also now working as a fireman, had married and established

his own household next door at 1518 North Lyndale.²² However, his place in the 1516 Lyndale household had been taken by 53-year old Anna O'Neil, a sister of the Hickey siblings.²³ Anna's husband had died in 1919.²⁴

The oldest Hickey brother, James, who'd worked as a janitor at the state capitol in St. Paul, died 1 July 1921 from Progressive Bulbar Palsy (PBP),²⁵ a disease similar to Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS).

The 1930 census finds William, Julia and Annie still living together at 1516 North Lyndale.²⁶ William was still a Minneapolis policeman; Julia was working in a private home as a housekeeper. Annie was not shown as employed outside the home in either the 1920 or 1930 census.

The Cottage in Tonka Bay

In July 1931, siblings William and Julia Hickey purchased a seasonal cottage in the village of Tonka Bay on Lake Minnetonka, where they spent time in the summer. They continued to maintain a principal residence in Minneapolis. They owned both their Minneapolis homestead and their Tonka Bay lake home as joint tenants with right of survivorship.²⁷

Many family photographs were taken at the cottage.²⁸ Enough photos exist to identify many of the subjects. In a photo marked "Mtka - 1939," William and Julia are pictured with brother Patrick, his wife Catherine and their son William (Victor), apparently on a hot summer day. In another summer photo, "Uncle Bill" and the nephew named after him are pictured with a string of fish. Another photo, taken in a cooler season, shows "Uncle Bill" standing near the cottage with nephew William V. and his wife, Violet, who were married in 1937.²⁹ Violet's diaries, maintained from 1931-1938, show frequent trips to Lake Minnetonka to visit William V.'s aunt and uncle.³⁰

"Aunt Julia" was diagnosed with spindle cell sarcoma of the elbow in late 1941,³¹ and doctors removed her left arm. Records of St Mary's Cemetery in south Minneapolis indicate her arm was buried there in July, 1942.³² However, surgery apparently did not stop the disease, and sarcoma was listed as the cause of her death, at age 77, on 10 February 1943.³³

Family lore holds that "Uncle Bill" gave his nephew Bill a choice between inheriting the Minneapolis residence or the Lake Minnetonka cottage, and young Bill chose the latter. On 20 April 1943, the senior William Hickey prepared an "affidavit of survivorship,"³⁴ including a certified copy of Julia's death certificate, to terminate her joint tenancy in their real estate. A month later, on 20 May 1943, William transferred the lake cottage to Camilla P. Axelson,³⁵ who was likely a stenographer for the law firm,³⁶ for "one dollar and other valuable

considerations." On the same date, she transferred the property back to "William Hickey and William V. Hickey, Uncle and Nephew," as joint tenants.³⁷ Camilla was, in effect, a strawperson in the transaction, acting as a conduit for transferring the property to joint tenancy.

A strawperson is an individual to whom property is conveyed in order to facilitate a more complicated legal transaction. Under common law, property owners cannot transfer their own property to themselves, which complicates creating a joint tenancy with another party. The original owner therefore conveys the property to a strawperson (often a lawyer or the lawyer's secretary), who in turn creates a second deed conveying property back to the original owner and the desired new joint tenant(s).³⁸

In July 1946, "Uncle Bill" was diagnosed with cancer of the esophagus.³⁹ "Considering the uncertainty of this frail and transitory life," William made his last will and testament on 16 September 1946.⁴⁰ A typed, three-page, carbon-copy of this will was found with other Hickey family documents and photographs. The will was witnessed by Frances S. Harrison and Geo. P. Madison. In it, William specified that his estate should be divided evenly among his 15 nieces and nephews, whom he named in Articles 2 through 6.

Then the mystery clause appears. Article 7 states, "In addition to the gift, devise, and bequest in Article 6 hereof, I give, devise and bequeath to George Hickey, my beloved nephew⁴¹, an undivided one-half interest in and to the following described real property in the Village of Tonka Bay..."

Attached to the copy of the will was a page entitled "Description of Contents of Safe Deposit Box,"⁴² listing \$1,000 bank accounts established in July 1946 "in trust" for several of his (favorite?) nieces and nephews, as well as citing the original warranty deeds for William and Julia's real property in Minneapolis (dated 1935) and Tonka Bay (dated 1931).

William died a few months later on 14 January 1947 at age 80.⁴³ The executor of his will, Attorney Joseph Pinger, paid medical and funeral expenses, sold the Minneapolis residence (for \$7,500), liquidated various investments, and duly divided the proceeds among William's 15 nieces and nephews according to the terms of the will.⁴⁴ The six nieces and nephews who were recipients of the \$1,000 (plus interest) bank accounts received \$1,594.76 each; the remaining nine heirs received \$587.20.

However, in his final report for the estate, Attorney Pinger did not address the half-interest in the lake cottage William willed to nephew George Pinger, noting only that the deceased had "further provided for the distribution of real property in the Village of Tonka

Bay...which property was not included in the inventory filed herein."⁴⁵ What did that mean?

The May 1943 deed had placed the Tonka Bay property in joint tenancy, which involves a "right of survivorship." This means when one owner dies, the property passes by operation of law to the surviving owner, who receives sole ownership of the asset. What a will says is irrelevant.⁴⁶ The cottage on Lake Minnetonka was excluded from "Uncle Bill's" estate because it passed to his nephew Bill immediately upon the elder William's death.

Attorney Pinger's final report included a computation of the amount of state inheritance taxes due from the heirs receiving more than \$1,000⁴⁷. George Hickey paid no inheritance tax and apparently received only \$587.20 when the estate was closed. "Uncle Bill" had not included George when he set up the special \$1,000 bank accounts. In lieu of the extra cash, had "Uncle Bill" decided to give nephew George a half-interest in the lake cottage?

In willing half the Lake Minnetonka property to George, it appears "Uncle Bill" did not fully understand the implications of his 1943 deed granting joint tenancy to nephew Bill. Did serious health problems affect his memory or judgment? Did he believe he'd given nephew Bill just the half-interest that had belonged to the deceased "Aunt Julia"? Did "Uncle Bill" really think his nephews George and Bill should co-own the property?

It's certainly possible George had become closer to "Uncle Bill" as a young adult, while Bill and Violet were busy with their young children. George was about 10 years younger than his cousin Bill.⁴⁸ George was 29 years old when his uncle died; Bill was 39. George did not marry until 1951,⁴⁹ so he likely had more free time to spend with his uncle during the years 1943-1947. We can only conjecture about who was "Uncle Bill's" favorite nephew at the time he was drawing up his will.

Had "Uncle Bill" failed to get adequate legal advice when creating his last will and testament? Perhaps more information about the witnesses to the will would shed light on the situation. The 1946 Minneapolis city directory showed witness Frances S. Harrison as office secretary for Harrison Services. The business, owned by Norman B. Harrison, provided publishing services.⁵⁰ One could reasonably assume Frances, as office secretary, was a good typist. The second witness, George P. Madison, worked as an accountant for the Chas. H. Preston accounting firm in downtown Minneapolis.⁵¹

During the last months before his death, William resided at the Andrews Hotel, located at the corner of Fourth Street and Hennepin.⁵² The Chas. H. Preston accounting firm maintained its offices at 12 South 6th Street⁵³, only two blocks away. William may have walked there for

assistance in preparing his will.

According to the 1946 city directory, Leigh C. Harrison was one of the managing partners of the Preston CPA firm. The involvement of three individuals named Harrison probably wasn't a coincidence. Frances Harrison was Norman Harrison's daughter;⁵⁴ Leigh Harrison and Frances Harrison resided at the same address in 1946⁵⁵. Someone in the Harrison family was likely known personally and trusted by "Uncle Bill." It appears Frances typed the will, including at least one carbon copy, and possibly George Madison (or another Chas. H. Preston accountant) gave William professional advice.

It seems clear "Uncle Bill" did his estate-planning in small pieces – first creating a joint tenancy deed on the cottage in 1943, then establishing the \$1,000 bank accounts for selected nieces and nephews in July 1946, then preparing his will in September 1946. There is no evidence an attorney or other estate/property law specialist looked at the whole picture to ensure the senior William's intentions were carried out.

Property law can be complicated, and it's not uncommon for people to misunderstand or misremember how their property is titled. Further, legal requirements vary by state. In Minnesota, however, properly-executed warranty deeds always have priority over wills.⁵⁶

DESCENDANTS OF PATRICK HICKEY AND JULIA RYAN HICKEY		
(Note: Includes only partial listing of 3rd generation)		
1	Patrick Hickey	1819 - 1884
.....	+ Julia Ryan	1827 - 1908
.....2	Mary Josephine Hickey White	1857 - 1943
.....2	Margaret Hickey Kehoe	1858 - 1942
.....2	James Hickey	1860 - 1921
.....2	Honora "Annie" Hickey O'Neil	1862 - 1949
.....2	Julia Hickey	1865 - 1943
.....2	Patrick Hickey	1865 - 1940
.....+	Catherine Quinn	1873 - 1948
.....3	William Victor Hickey	1907 - 1981
.....3	Julia Rose Hickey	1909 - 1968
.....2	William Hickey	1866 - 1947
.....2	Ellen "Nell" Hickey Aubart	1869 - 1960
.....2	Michael Hickey	1871 - 1949
.....+	Alma Morin	1885 - 1973
.....3	Son	1913 - 1981
.....3	Daughter	1916 - 1987
.....3	George Bernard Hickey	1917 - 2007
.....3	Son	1923 - 1971

My research is inconclusive. We'll never know what "Uncle Bill's" thought processes were or exactly how the will came to be prepared, nor can we document what transpired between cousins Bill and George after their uncle's death. However, the undeniable fact is the Lake Minnetonka property remained in William V. Hickey's

name, and his family enjoyed use of the cottage for many years.

Genealogical inquiries can take us only so far, and sometimes parts of the story must remain a mystery. But, attention to details, we can learn from the missteps of our ancestors.

Sources:

1. Typed carbon copy of will in the possession of the author.
2. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1947-18909, William Hickey.
3. Hickey family Bible in the possession of the author.
4. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1940-18319, Patrick Hickey; Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1943-18617, Julia Hickey.
5. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1943-18617, Julia Hickey.
6. Pre-1907 Wisconsin Marriage Record, Rock County, Vol. no. 1, Page 27, Patrick Hickey and Julia Ryan.
7. Hickey family Bible, in the possession of the author; 1860 U.S. Census, Ramsey County, Minnesota, New Canada Township, page 276.
8. 1870 U.S. Census, Waseca County, Minnesota, Vivian Township, page 1; 1880 U.S. Census, Waseca County, Minnesota, Vivian Township, page 11.
9. Waseca County Death Register, Book A/25/39, pages 1 and 2; *Waseca Radical*, 27 February 1884, page 4; Transcription of Minnesota Cemeteries (www.Dalbydata.com), St. Mary's Cemetery, Waseca.
10. *Waseca Radical*, 16 May 1888, page 5.
11. 1890 *Davison's Minneapolis Directory*, pages 595-596.
12. Hickey family Bible in the possession of the author.
13. 1900 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 5, page 28A.
14. Patrick Hickey obituary, "Deaths and Funerals", *Minneapolis Star*, 18 January 1940, p.14, col. 1.
15. Marriage License and Certificate, Patrick Hickey and Catherine Quinn, Hennepin County, Marriage Record book 116, page 426.
16. Minnesota Certificate of Birth, 1907-33727, "Babe" Hickey; Hickey family Bible in the possession of the author.
17. Minnesota Certificate of Birth, 1909-43952, "Babe" Hickey; Hickey family Bible in the possession of the author.
18. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1908-17150, Julia Hickey.
19. Transcription of Minnesota Cemeteries (www.Dalbydata.com), St. Mary's Cemetery, Waseca.
20. 1910 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 15A.
21. 1920 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 5B; 1930 Minneapolis City Directory, page 753; 1930 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 6A.
22. 1920 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 5B.
23. 1920 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 5B.
24. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1919-20432, John O'Neil.
25. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1921-18689, James Hickey.
26. 1930 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 3, page 6A.
27. Warranty deed no. 1795939, dated 20 April 1935, Hennepin County, Book 1363, page 471.
28. Photographs in the possession of the author.
29. Hickey family Bible in the possession of the author.
30. Violet Hickey's diaries in the possession of the author.
31. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1943-18617, Julia Hickey.
32. St Mary's Cemetery Burial Records, "Arm of Julia Hickey" buried 9 July 1942.
33. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1943-18617, Julia Hickey.
34. Affidavit of Survivorship, dated 20 April 1943, Miscellaneous Records Book 429, Page 84, Doc no. 2180496.
35. Warranty Deed, dated 20 May 1943, Book 1720, Page 638, Doc no. 2420534.
36. 1930 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 8, page 17A. Camilla Axelson, age 30, was employed as a stenographer in an attorney's office.
37. Warranty Deed, dated 20 May 1943, Book 1746, Page 56, Doc no. 2420535.
38. Definition of "strawperson", from *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia* (www.Wikipedia.org).
39. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1947-18909, William Hickey.
40. Copy of the will in the possession of the author.
41. George was a son of William's younger brother, Michael, as described in Article 6 of the will.
42. Copy of the will in the possession of the author.
43. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1947-18909, William Hickey.
44. Probate file of William Hickey, Hennepin County, File no. 067600.
45. Probate file of William Hickey, Hennepin County, File no.067600.
46. Interview with Attorney Freya Ottem Hanson, 15 June 2011; interview notes retained by author.
47. Probate file of William Hickey, Hennepin County, File no. 067600.
48. Minnesota Certificate of Birth, Hennepin County, 1917-45669, unnamed baby, surname Hickey, mother's maiden name Morin.
49. Minnesota Official Marriage System (MOMS), Marriage of George Bernard Hickey and Lucille Julia Safranski, 1951 October 13, certificate 598 0101 (www.mncounty.com)
50. 1946 Minneapolis City Directory, page 524.
51. 1946 Minneapolis City Directory, page 1060.
52. Minnesota Certificate of Death, Hennepin County, 1947-18909, William Hickey.
53. 1946 Minneapolis City Directory, page 1060.
54. 1930 U.S. Census, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis, Ward 8, page 3B.
55. 1946 Minneapolis City Directory, page 524.
56. Interview with Attorney Freya Ottem Hanson, 15 June 2011; interview notes retained by the author.

Breaking through my Brick Wall: Charles Parmer of Iowa and California

by Cathi Weber

For more than 20 years, I faced a brick wall in my research of my maternal grandfather, Charles Parmer. All I knew was his whereabouts between 1930 and his death in 1958. Notes in my baby book identify his parents as William and Mary (Burkett) Parmer and give his birth date as 30 July 1882. His death certificate states his birth location as Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and his occupation as a carpenter.¹ A handwritten note that says his brothers' names were Frank and Bill.

Charles told my grandmother, Grace, that he was born in 1882, which would make him 24 years older than she. (Grace was born in Pennsylvania in 1906.²) Nonetheless, I have always wondered where he was before 1930. Why had I not found any earlier record for him? Could he have had another family before he met my grandmother?

Census and other records kept leading me back to a "Palmer" family in Cedar Rapids, a family whose members' names and dates matched those I expected for the "Parmer" family, except that it did not include a Charles Benjamin born 30 July 1882. Strangely, the Iowa records indicated another child: Bert Clark Palmer, born 30 July 1873 – the same day, but in a different year than the birth information I had for my grandfather. I have been able to find records for this Palmer family back to the 1600s through New York and Massachusetts to England.

After many hours of research on the Cedar Rapids Palmers, I found records of brothers Frank and Bill and their families living in the Cedar Rapids area. I also found records of their youngest brother Bert Clark and his family living in California. Bert had married Clara Engle in 1896 in Cedar Rapids³ and moved to California by 1900. He is listed in the 1900⁴ and 1910⁵ census with his wife and children. Bert's mother, Mary E. Palmer, died 18 November 1914 in Springville, Linn County, Iowa. Her obituary lists Bert Clark Palmer living in California, and William and Frank living in Springville, Iowa.⁶



William, Carleton and Frank Palmer

I decided I needed more information about the Palmer family, that might produce any lead to a possible fourth child, Charles Benjamin. On a research trip to Cedar Rapids, I found the 1916 final estate papers of Mary E. Palmer in Linn County, Iowa.⁷ These documents included the signatures of all three sons. Remembering my mother had a letter written by my grandfather in 1956, I asked her to send me a copy so I could compare the handwriting. It was remarkably similar – the letters, the slant, the spacing. Could the signature in the estate papers be that of my grandfather?

From my Palmer family research – census, birth, marriage, death, obituary, and military records – I was able to find addresses for some of Bert's grandchildren. I mailed six letters on a Friday in July 2007. By the next Thursday, I had received e-mails from Marilyn and Don, both of whom stated that Bert left his California family about 1915 and never returned. When he did not return, the family speculated that there might have been a train robbery or that he had met with foul play. In the 1920 census, Clara Palmer is listed as a widow with five children,⁸ but I could not find a death record for Bert.

Bert's granddaughter, Marilyn, sent me a photo of her grandfather taken about 1903, which I compared with a 1954 photo I have of my grandfather, Charles

Parmer. Even though the photos were taken more than 50 years apart, the features of the two men are remarkably similar.

On another trip to Iowa, I met two grandchildren of Bert's brother William Palmer. Ardis had a photo of William, Frank and Bert's oldest son, Carleton. William looked a lot like the photo I have of my grandfather, Charles. We compared more information and photos to see if these two men could actually be the same person. Not only was I breaking through my brick wall, but I was also breaking through that of the Iowa Palmers. I was now nearly certain that Bert and Charles were the same person, but

I needed to convince my still skeptical father.

There was only one sure way to determine if the descendants of Bert and Charles were related – DNA testing. Merle (son of Charles) and Dick (grandson of Bert) consented to the DNA test. After a three-week wait, we received the results. Merle and Dick were a perfect match!

We are now convinced that, for reasons we may never know, Bert Clark Palmer left his family in California about 1916, changed his name and age, and by 1930, had become Charles Benjamin Parmer. I hope to someday find out what happened between 1916 and 1930.

Sources:

1. Missouri Death Certificate, Charles Benjamin Parmer July 10, 1958 no. 58-025984 Jasper County.
2. Birth Certificate, Antis Township, Blair County, Pennsylvania.
3. Iowa Marriage Records, Linn County Genealogical Society, 813 1st Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
4. 1900 Census, California, Riverside Co, City of Riverside, precinct 6, sheet 6a, June 6, 1900.
5. 1910 Census, California, Los Angeles, Pasadena City, Pasadena Twp, April 21, 1910, sheet 8a.
6. Obituary of Mary E Palmer, Springville, Iowa, *Springville New Era*, November 26, 1914.
7. Linn County Genealogical Society, 813 1st Ave SE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
8. 1920 Census, California, Los Angeles, Pasadena Township, Lamanda District, precinct 3, sheet 2a, Jan 2, 1920.

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Cemetery Memories

by Bergetta Monroe

I have often said, "I grew up in cemeteries!" When I was a child, Memorial Day weekends were always spent in the same way. On Saturday morning my Dad worked in the local lumberyard; in the afternoon he planted the garden. I think he may have plowed and prepared the soil in the evenings during the previous week. On Sunday we went to church and then headed for the cemeteries closest to our home to visit the graves of Dad's relatives.

My father's dad was a Civil War Veteran, so Dad always took a flag to put on grandpa's grave. Since every year someone had already placed flags on the veteran's graves, Dad would remove the flag from his father's grave and place it on one that was always missed. That way the flag my Dad brought could be the one to honor grandpa's service!

On Monday, Memorial Day, we would go to visit the graves on my mom's side of the family, which were located further away. To my knowledge, there were no veterans on Mom's side. Three of my mom's siblings lived close to those cemeteries, so we would sometimes visit with them also. During the rest of the year, we would again stop at those cemeteries when we visited aunts and uncles.

The family joke was that Dad took Mother to cemeteries on their honeymoon--but it's a true story! After Mother died and my father came to live with me, he had me drive him to one of the cemeteries

near Mankato or St. Peter, stating that he had last visited it on his honeymoon! Later, I took him to Lakewood Cemetery in South Minneapolis, he wanted to know how many acres it held! I called and found the answer: 253 acres!

In August of 2010, when I hosted the Griswold Family Association in the Twin Cities, I included a guided bus tour of Lakewood Cemetery because 36 Griswold "cousins" are buried there. I hosted another bus tour of the same cemetery for MGS in April 2011.

I feel cemeteries are a very important part of our heritage, and we owe it to our younger generations to teach them to revere their ancestors' final resting places. It is our duty to share memories of these people, teach proper behavior in cemeteries, and care for headstones. Grandparents could have a very memorable day with their grandchildren if they planned an old-fashioned picnic and shared family history in a cemetery. Don't worry that the kids might not like it. Trust me, fifty years later it will be one of their most cherished memories!

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about cemetery tours, either guided or self-guided.

Romanians Have Deep Roots in South St. Paul

by Vicki Young Albu

When a recent Google search for “Romanian genealogy” generated only 977 hits, I was compelled to establish a Romanian Genealogical Society (RGS). Very few organizations in the world are devoted to the study of Romanian genealogy, and I am not sure why. After years of searching for an outlet for exploring and sharing our Romanian ancestry, a friend and I decided to create our own.

The Minnesota Genealogical Society is helping us organize the RGS. It will have ties to the Heritage Organization of Romanian Americans in Minnesota (www.hora-mn.org). What better place to establish a Romanian genealogy group than here in South St. Paul, Minnesota, where hundreds of early Romanian immigrants worked in the meatpacking industry in the early 20th century and established a thriving religious and cultural community? Few descendants of the original immigrant families remain in the area, but Romanian influences can still be seen.

Most Romanians who arrived in the United States between 1900 and 1925 were single and married men who arrived without women. They were on a mission of *mia și drumul* or “a thousand dollars and home again,” meaning that they intended to stay just long enough to earn the money to purchase small acreage back in Romania. They were primarily agricultural peasants who came to the Midwest to find jobs as unskilled laborers, and therefore they migrated toward rail yards, slaughterhouses and factories.

Like many other European ethnic groups, Romanians were attracted to South St. Paul by abundant manual jobs in the stockyards and meatpacking plants like Swift and Company and Armour.¹ During the early 1900s, South St. Paul was home to one of the largest stockyards and some of the largest meatpackers in the country, employing thousands of American-born and foreign laborers.

“Fourteen carloads of immigrants pulled into the Concord Street station nearly every morning in the early years of the 1900s,” wrote Lois Glewwe in *South St. Paul Centennial History*.² The livestock industry jobs required little to no training, and Romanian men used to agricultural lifestyles were no strangers to animal slaughter and blood. In

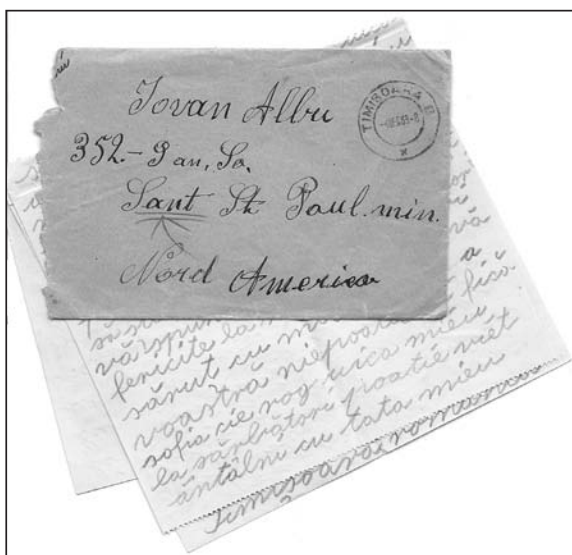
1904 there were only 12 Romanians in the city of about 3,000 residents; by 1906 there were 32, all of them men employed as general laborers and meat-cutters by Swift and Company.³ By 1916 there were so many Romanians that the *South St. Paul Daily Reporter* newspaper said that there were more “Rumanians” living in the city than any other foreign nationality. Yet the majority of them longed to go home.

In February 1918, the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety conducted interviews of all foreign-born, non-naturalized citizens or “resident aliens” to determine their patriotism and identify any who might be threats to public safety during wartime. Immigrants were asked where they were born and when they immigrated, what possessions they owned in the United States and abroad, whether they had relatives fighting in enemy armies, and whether they had filed citizenship papers here. Over half of the Romanian immigrants (men as well as women), even those with small children, indicated that they planned to go back to the old country.⁴

In fact, a large number did go back; one estimate is that 66 percent of all Romanians admitted to the United States between 1899 and 1924 returned to their native country.⁵ This rate of re-migration was higher

than that of almost any other ethnic group, according to a U.S. government analysis of migration between the United States and Europe between 1908 and 1923.⁶ While over half of the Romanian immigrants returned home, many who came to South St. Paul remained. The majority of their descendants eventually settled throughout the United States and Canada, but their presence can still be felt in South St. Paul, in Oak Hill Cemetery and in St. Stefan’s Romanian Orthodox Church.

As previously noted, most of the original Romanian arrivals were men. During the early emigration period from about 1900 to 1925, most Romanian wives stayed behind in the “old country” to care for children and families while their husbands sought their fortunes. However, it proved more difficult than expected for men to earn the requisite \$1,000. After a year or more of waiting for husbands to return, Romanian women began making



Letter from a relative in Romania to John Albu in South St. Paul.

the journey to America to assist with the enterprise. As more women joined the South St. Paul community and children were born there, family connections were solidified and extended kinship networks followed. As a result, after about 1925 many Romanian families shifted their sights from “a thousand dollars and home again” to establishing permanent residence in the United States.

By 1920 approximately 85,000 Romanians were living in the United States, taking into account the 60,000 or so who had returned.⁷ It is difficult to quantify the exact number since the majority of the post-1895 emigrants left the territories of Transylvania or the Banat, areas that were not part of the Romanian Kingdom but were under Austro-Hungarian or Hungarian rule until 1918. Therefore the country of origin listed on migration documents may not have reflected an emigrant’s true nationality or ethnic background. This author’s research indicates that the majority of South St. Paul Romanians came from Transylvania and the Banat, especially the towns of Sânnicolau Mare, Arad, and Timișoara.

Transylvania and the Banat today make up approximately the northwest quarter of Romania. Both are fertile agricultural areas among the Carpathian Mountains that were historically under control of noble Austrian and Hungarian landlords. Transylvanian serfs were emancipated in 1854, but as peasants, in reality their condition changed very little.⁸ For example, in 1875 in the village of Bințiți, more than a third of the peasantry remained dependent on landlords, to whom they paid three days of labor per week in exchange for use of the land. Many may have supplemented their income by caring for the landlord’s livestock, selling eggs, or the wife’s sewing jobs.

Economic conditions worsened after a series of poor harvests and medical epidemics in the late 19th century. By 1895 half the peasants remained landless. Agricultural advances did not come to Transylvania until after World War I. Until then, peasant workers continued to use animals and antiquated tools to plant and harvest in the traditional ways of their ancestors.⁹ At the turn of the century, Romanian peasants saw little hope of improving their financial condition or that of future generations.

Further, ethnic Romanians were tired of being subjected to laws that they felt demeaned

their language and eroded their culture. Leading up to World War I, ethnic rivalries and yearning for political autonomy led to strife and conflict among Eastern European peoples. The ruling Magyars (Hungarians) promoted Hungarian nationalism, and their attempts to “denationalize” Romanians in Transylvania and the Banat remained strong.¹⁰ For example, during the 19th century, the Hungarian government’s Magyarization reforms sought to mandate Hungarian instead of Romanian names, Catholic instead of Orthodox church schools, and to prevent land ownership by ethnic Romanians. These repressive efforts contributed to an outbreak of harvest strikes by the Romanian peasantry between 1903 and 1907.¹¹

Romanians also were motivated to emigrate by advertisements and letters that promised America as a land of opportunity. Lois Glewwe writes in the *South St. Paul Centennial History* that the city’s meatpacking industries commissioned agents to hire laborers in Europe and bring them to South St. Paul.¹² Ninety-seven percent of Romanian immigrants to the United States between 1895 and 1920 were unskilled laborers and many were semi-literate. Between 1900 and 1905, about 12,000 Transylvanians left for the United States; between 1905 and 1909 that number exploded to more than 70,000.¹³

Romanians carried deeply ingrained traditions when they settled in North America. Folk culture, tradition and religion were the threads that held together the fabric of Romanian immigrant society. The Orthodox Church was and still is the center of the community, its “heart and soul.”¹⁴ Partly because most early Romanian-American immigrants were peasants who had not previously traveled farther than their neighboring villages, their community in the United States was a tight one.

America dealt most of the new immigrants a powerful culture shock. The social mores and traditions of their past were often at odds with what they found in the new country. Gradually, they modified some of their long-held traditions through assimilation and intermarriage with people of other cultures and faiths. Most of the original immigrants were blue-collar workers, although many became self-employed, owning barbershops, restaurants, pool halls, and grocery stores. Their children were likely to attend university and many obtained professional degrees.



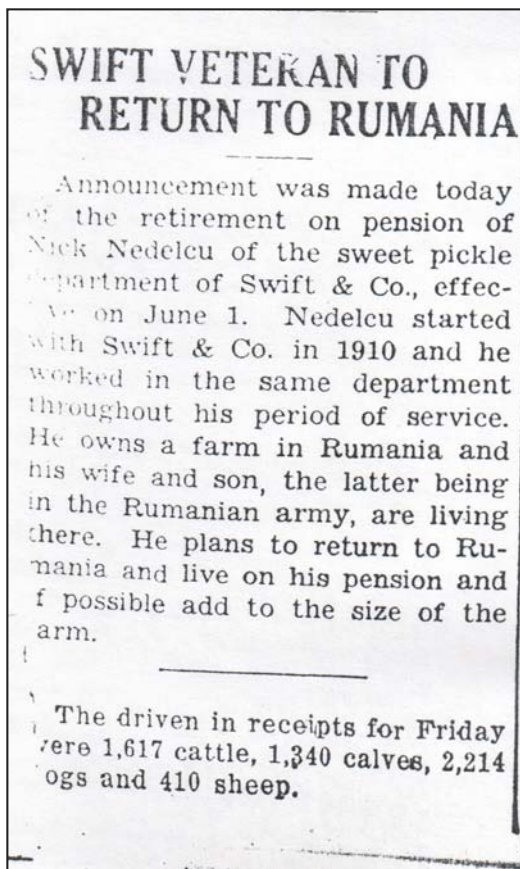
South St. Paul boarding house, about 1914. Photo belonged to author’s grandmother who is in photo.

The large Romanian population established St. Stephen's Romanian Orthodox Church on Fifth Avenue North in 1924, even though St. Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church had already been built in neighboring Saint Paul in 1913. While both churches are currently struggling due to declines in membership, they manage to survive. Each building is on the National Register of Historic Places. Today the number of South St. Paul residents claiming Romanian roots is small, but Romanian influence on the community's history remains strong.

A few descendants of the original Romanian settlers still live in South St. Paul and nearby today, and we are fortunate that some traditions, such as annual church dinners to celebrate the fall harvest, continue. The Izvorasul Romanian dance group, led by John Omorean, is a cornerstone of the Twin Cities Romanian community. Romanian immigrants to Minnesota since the end of the Cold War have led to resurgence in church membership and cultural traditions, such as summer festivals. The newer arrivals are well educated and grew up in political and technological eras far different from those of the

original immigrant families. The groups have diverse interests and experiences, but they collectively agree on the need to promote and preserve their common heritage. There is tremendous community support for the recently formed Heritage Organization of Romanian Americans in Minnesota (HORA) and for a Romanian Genealogical Society.

The RGS will document local Romanian-American family histories, record oral history interviews with community elders and leaders and publish a Romanian Genealogy Research Guide. The membership will decide on a 2012 meeting calendar and will publish a regular newsletter for members. For more information and to request a membership application, please contact Vicki Young Albu by e-mail at young754@umn.edu or by mail to Romanian Genealogical Society in care of MGS at Room 218, 1185 N. Concord St., South St. Paul, MN 55075.



Veteran sweet pickle worker returns to Romania, South St. Paul Daily Reporter, 15 June 1935.

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3. Stefan, 42-43.
4. Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, 1918 Alien Registration Records of South St. Paul, Dakota County, Minnesota, Minnesota Historical Society Archives.
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9. *Ibid.* 237.
10. *Ibid.* 223.
11. Pascu, Stefan. *A History of Transylvania*. Translated by D. Robert Ladd. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1982), 249-251.
12. Glewwe, 249.
13. Pascu, 228-233.
14. Hanganu-Bresch, Cristina, *From Living to Symbolic Practice: The Romanian Community of St. Mary's Orthodox Church, St. Paul, Minnesota* (unpublished manuscript, University of Minnesota, 2002).

Learning New Genealogical Skills

by Gayle Geber

They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Being an old dog myself – and a baby boomer at that – I rather resent that adage. At times it's hard to admit that I am "that old," but when I'm talking with my old-dog friends we often share our challenges with learning new technologies or adapting to new fields of endeavor. There does seem to be a trick to learning a new skill.

Because there are so many new genealogy datasets and strategies to learn about, it can be daunting to begin, even if one is highly motivated to learn. Art Costa of the Institute for Habits of Mind posits 16 habits of mind – attributes of intelligent behavior. One habit is applying past knowledge to new situations.¹

We can draw upon our past accomplishments or a body of knowledge in one field and use that as a tool to tackle a new problem. This probably applies to genealogy, too. To learn about how genealogists do take advantage of knowledge gained from other endeavors, I decided to ask some experienced genealogists.

Survey Methodology and Findings

I asked genealogists attending the June 2011 Minnesota Genealogical Society conference in Winona to complete a three-question survey. The questions were:

- What professional or personal skills or talents have helped in your genealogy endeavors?
- How has this talent or skill helped in your research? and
- What advice do you have for genealogy beginners?

Nineteen people responded to at least one of the questions. Many people shared several thoughts for each question. Several themes emerged from their responses.

Use what you learned at work. One-third of the respondents said that the skill or talent they apply to genealogy derived from their non-genealogy work experiences. I categorized their non-genealogy occupations as "high tech" (e.g., engineers or data analysts) or "high touch" (e.g., teachers or interviewers).

High tech individuals named several job skills that helped them in genealogy, including:

- Setting up organizational systems,
- Using spreadsheets to collect and analyze data,
- Making decisions about what data to focus on,
- Applying knowledge of how to do research on objects to how to research on people,

- Identifying possible alternative explanations for a genealogical finding,
- Being exacting by habit, and
- Learning how to persevere when running into dead ends.

High touch individuals identified similar issues as the high tech respondents, but they recognized other characteristics that applied to genealogy, including:

- Using organizational skills,
- Paying attention to detail,
- Knowing about online databases and other resources,
- Thinking, writing and making connections,
- Listening and asking thoughtful questions when interviewing relatives, and
- Explaining complex issues in an easily understandable manner.

Be who you are. Four respondents named personality traits that help in genealogy.

- Curiosity to learn new things about one's family,
- An ability to talk with anyone, and
- Being a "detail person" and being organized when using paper and electronic documents.

Thank your teachers. Two respondents cited things they learned in school, including:

- Correct grammar and English language usage, and
- Knowledge of history.

Revel in your passions. Two people thought certain passions helped them in their genealogy:

- Love of history and psychology, which led to being good at solving puzzles and discovering ancestors one at a time, and
- Love of reading mystery novels because, after all, genealogy is all about solving mysteries.

Apply general knowledge you have. Two people noted the importance of Internet skills and the ability to use genealogical websites.

Survey respondents were also asked what advice they

had for individuals who are new to genealogy. Far and away, the most common advice was to talk with relatives about their memories soon, listen closely to what they say, and record what they say either digitally or by pen and paper. Many others stressed the need to set up systems to organize and retrieve records from the very beginning of one's genealogy work. Others stressed the importance of documenting sources and using original records whenever possible. Other advice included:

- Believe in yourself,
- When it comes to writing your family history, just do it.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Understand what you have already learned from your grandparents when you were growing up.
- Be disciplined; set small goals that you can reach, and then set additional goals after that.
- Define what you want to learn and frequently review what you already found.
- Write-up what you've discovered from your research; don't rely only on online databases to store data.

- Make a list of records you need to search.
- Use online information sources, but only as clues for further investigation.
- Complete pedigree and family group sheets.
- Use local libraries.
- Read widely.
- Attend genealogy conferences.
- Join genealogical societies.
- Set a regular place and time for your genealogy work.

Conclusions

So, I guess you can teach an old dog new tricks. O.K, not all respondents were old-dogs – but learning happens best when we can draw upon our past experiences to help learn new skills.

By the way, my 92-year-old father, an incredibly vibrant old-dog who is a lifelong learner, says he has a hard time believing he's old enough to have two daughters in their 60s. This proves another adage: in genealogy, everything – including age – is relative.

Source:

1. AL Costa and B Kallick. Describing 16 Habits of Mind. <www.instituteforhabitsofmind.com/resources/pdf/16HOM.pdf> accessed 10 June 2011.

EAST AND CENTRAL EUROPE FAMILY HISTORY DAYS

April 2012

Do you have ancestors from central or eastern Europe?

MGS and its Branch and Society partners announce a special cross-cultural program scheduled for April 2012. Look for date and program details in our newsletter and on our website in January.

This conference will feature fourteen presentations from family history experts who specialize in researching these areas, as well as vendors and exhibitors.

Sponsored by:

Minnesota Genealogical Society
Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International
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The Minnesota Genealogical Society congratulates winners of MGS Service and Achievement Awards.

SERVICE TO MGS

Pat and Dorothy Chandler Award for exceptional and prolonged volunteer service to the Minnesota Genealogical Society

Beth Mullinax

Previous winners: Kathy Lund, Dixie Hansen, and Margie Deutsch.

MGS Founders Award for visionary and strategic leadership that strengthens MGS's ability to fulfill its mission of serving the Minnesota genealogical community.

Mary Wickersham

Previous winners: Robin Panlener, John Schade, and Erv Chorn.

Unsung MGS Hero Award for incomparable behind-the-scenes service supporting the day-to-day operations of MGS.

Sandy Stadtherr

Previous winners: Gerald Maher, Jim Robasse, and MGS Technology Committee.

GENEALOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT

Minnesota Genealogy Pioneer Award for notable contributions to the development of Minnesota genealogical resources and research aids.

Jennifer de Fiebre

Previous winners: Mary Bakeman, Kathryn Otto, and John and Jan Dalby.

Minnesota North Star Award for exemplary contributions to genealogical research, writing or education.

Lois Abromitis Mackin

Previous winners: Darlene Joyce, Tom Rice, and Cathi Weber.

Minnesota Genealogy Ambassador Award for representing Minnesota genealogy in the region and nation and bringing honor to Minnesota genealogy.

J. H. Fonkert

Previous winners: Paula Stuart-Warren, Harold E. Hinds, Jr., and Alice Eichholz.

Michael Clark Family History Writing Award, co-sponsored by Yankee Genealogical Society of Minnesota

Georgetta Hickey

Beginning Genealogy Step 4: Learn from the Source

by Lois Mackin

In the MGS Beginning Genealogy Course, we encourage students to work through five steps:

1. Write down and organize what you know,
2. Decide what you want to learn,
3. Locate a useful source,
4. Learn from the source, and
5. Use what you learned.

Step 4 is where you glean all the possible information and clues from the source you found in Step 3. Here are seven Dos and Don'ts to help you learn from your source.

1. **Do** read the whole source carefully. If it's a form (like a vital records certificate), read all the column headings and labels as well as the entry. If it's a written document (like a will or a deed), read all the "boilerplate"—you may discover gems.

Don't skim for bits of information you are looking for (like the death date on a death certificate) and ignore the rest (like the occupation, marital status, address, spouse's name, or parents' names). You never know what you'll find in a source, and you need to glean everything that's there.

2. **Do** be sure you are reading handwriting correctly. Compare letters you can't read with similar letters on surrounding pages. Know if there are peculiarities associated with the handwriting of the place and time (e.g., the long s, the thorn—often transcribed as "ye" instead of "the," and methods for shortening commonly used words). Check the Resources below for handwriting help.

Don't bumble through the handwriting, ignoring words that don't make sense. The words you ignore might be critical to understanding the document and learning about your research subject!

3. **Do** look up archaic, occupational, legal and medical terms. Is the "infant" listed in your 17th-century ancestor's will a baby, or simply a person below the age of majority? If you know the usage of your ancestor's time, you will be less likely to make mistakes. Our 2010 North Star Conference speaker Tom Jones solved a case by correctly identifying carpenters' tools.¹

Don't ignore terms you don't understand, guess, or assume a meaning. Many terms used in the past had different meanings from today's usage. If you assume that the "infant" in the will is a baby, you'll create incorrect age estimates for the children in

the family you're researching. And if you think your homesteading ancestor's sulky plow was a horseracing vehicle used at the county fair, you're misreading his inventory.

4. **Do** understand the process that created your source. If you're working with census records, read about how censuses were taken. If you're looking at a marriage record, know whether it's a license application, a certificate or a return, and understand how they are different.

Don't look at sources outside the context of their place and time.

5. **Do** make note of who provided each piece of information in the source. Did that person have first-hand knowledge of the information he or she provided? Tip: A source may have more than one informant—for example, on a death certificate, a physician may have certified the date, time, place and cause of death, but a family member may have provided information about birth, occupation, spouse and parents.

Don't assign equal credibility to all the information in the source.

6. **Do** consider creating a word-for-word extract or transcription of the information. You'll be surprised at how much more you notice by doing this. Enter information from forms—census forms, registers or ledgers, for example—into spreadsheets, tables or forms created for the purpose. When you extract, copy the information exactly as you see it, including misspellings, errors and all. Transcribe the entirety of prose documents, such as letters or diary entries. Transcriptions are exact reproductions of what is written, errors and all. You might even want to reproduce the original line breaks to make it easier to verify your transcription against the original. This is particularly useful when transcribing a foreign language document before making a translation. If you need to correct something in your extract or transcription or add notes, enclose your additions in square brackets like this: []. The square brackets tell your readers that the material inside the brackets has been added by you and was not in the original. For example, if the document you are extracting or transcribing lists your research subject's birthplace as "Springfield," you may wish to transcribe the birthplace as "Springfield [Illinois]." Adding "Illinois" in square brackets gives your reader

clarifying information and indicates that it was not in the original document, but was added by you.

Don't grab just the information you want and go. Wills, deeds, affidavits, letters, census records and journals are complex documents. Not only handwriting but vocabulary, word order and sentence structure are important for comprehension. Reproducing the document by extraction or transcription ensures that you grapple with and understand the meaning of these elements.

7. **Do** make note of clues for further research. For example, if a census record says your research subject owned land, make a note to look for land records. If an informant is someone unknown to you, make a note to find out how that person related to your subject.

Don't assume you'll remember to do all these things—most likely, like most of us, you'll forget! So make a checklist.

Resources and Opportunities for More Learning

Reading handwriting

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"United States Handwriting," *FamilySearch Wiki* (https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/United_States_Handwriting): accessed 28 September 2001). NOTE: The FamilySearch Wiki has numerous articles on handwriting in many countries. Find them using a keyword search for "handwriting."

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Black, Henry Campbell, et al. *Black's Law Dictionary*. Look for the 1st (1891) or 2nd (1910) editions. *Black's* is available on CD-ROM from Archive CD Books.

Bouvier, John, et al. *Bouvier's Law Dictionary*. A transcription of the revised 6th edition (1856) is available online at (<http://www.constitution.org/bouv/bouvier.htm>).

Medical terms

Chorzempa, Rosemary. *Morbus: Why and How Our*

Ancestors Died: a Genealogist's Dictionary of Terms Found in Vital Records with Description of the Diseases as They Relate to Health of Our Ancestors. Chicago: Polish Genealogical Society of America, 1991.

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Lois welcomes questions or suggestions for future topics! Contact her at LoisMackin@aol.com.

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A Genealogical Side-trip: Elizabeth Stephens Fawkner of Montrose, Lee County, Iowa

by J. H. Fonkert, CG

Have you ever wandered off the main road and discovered an unexpected side attraction that turns out to be a highlight of your vacation? It might have been a hole-in-the wall café or a quaint town down a country road off the main highway. It wasn't the purpose of your trip, but you are drawn back for further exploration the next time you pass through the area. You come home with a richer understanding of the region you were visiting.

Something similar can happen in genealogy research. We often start out singularly focused on an ancestral line, determined to get all the way back to that great-great-grandfather. But, because we know the importance of slowing down and paying attention to all the people hanging out with our ancestor, we sometimes stumble upon characters we just can't resist. The payoff can be new insights into what was happening in our ancestors' lives. The usual advice to genealogists is to stick to one line, chose a research question, and stay focused. It's good advice, but an occasional genealogical side-trip can be rewarding.

My most recent such experience was a side-trip from my research into the ancestry of James C. Fawkner. James was a son of John C. Fawkner, who married Ann Faulconer in 1828 in Orange County, Virginia.¹ They were known to have four other children – James C., Elizabeth A., John E., Cyrus W., and George S. Fawkner – named in guardianship records and from a family history account left by James C. Fawkner's daughter Ida.² Ann remarried to Wesley Sears in 1 September 1840.³ The 1850 U.S. Census enumerated John, Cyrus and George in the household of Ann and Wesley Sears.⁴ In the next household was James C. and an apparent wife.⁵ Elizabeth was married and living nearby.⁶ John C. Fawkner had died in 1839.⁷ All five children were living with their mother at the time of the census a year later.⁸

John C. Fawkner's probate record forced me to slow down. In it, the court identified four heirs:

"Cornelius Faulkner"
"Mariah Williams"
"Martha Buchman, wife of Samuel J. Buchman, formerly Martha Faulkner"
"Sarah Stone, formerly Sarah Faulkner."⁹

The unexpected appearance of these heirs was like encountering a "curve ahead" or "Y-intersection" sign while driving to great-great grandfather's. The prudent driver slows down and looks both ways. So do genealogists. They ask questions. Why were Cornelius, Mariah, Martha and Sarah named as heirs of John C. Fawkner? Were they his children? Who was their mother?

Research proved that they were children of John C. Fawkner from three previous, hitherto unknown, marriages. The proofs of the parentages of Cornelius, Mariah, Martha and Sarah are complicated and not the subject of this article.¹⁰ Rather, this article is a travelogue report of a genealogical side-trip that started when I followed Cornelius to Montrose, in Lee County of southeastern Iowa.

Montrose: a Fork in the Research Road

Montrose, hard on the Mississippi River opposite the Mormon town of Nauvoo, Illinois, produced the first solid clue that James C. Fawkner and Cornelius Faulkner were related. In the late 1840s, Montrose was already prospering from river commerce, but got an extra boost when the Mormons purchased wagons and provisions on the Iowa shore as they set out for Utah.

In 1850, Cornelius Faulkner and his wife Elizabeth (Kite) lived in Montrose with the family of William Owens.¹¹ Cornelius was a boatman. Elizabeth died in July, shortly after being enumerated in the census.¹²

Two pieces of information from Montrose make it clear Cornelius was the half-brother of James C. Fawkner. First, during the probate of John C. Fawkner's estate, Cornelius gave an indenture in which "Cornelius Fawkner of Lee and Territory of Iowa" relinquished to Wesley B. Sears claims to interests in lands descended to him at the death of "his father John C. Fawkner."¹³ Second, although Cornelius does not appear in the 1856 state or 1860 federal census for Lee County, the family of his brother James does. In 1856, James C. and Elizabeth "Falkner" were enumerated immediately before the family of William Owens – the same family that Cornelius had lived with in 1850.¹⁴



James C. Fawkner, about 1880.

James had married his stepfather's daughter, Elizabeth Sears, in 1848.¹⁵ When his young bride died, he remarried to Elizabeth Stephens in 1854, and the couple set out for Iowa in the spring of 1855.¹⁶ Daughter Ida was born there in 1856; Josephine followed in 1858.¹⁷ The 1860 census presented another surprise: Elizabeth and her two daughters were at home in Montrose, but James was absent.¹⁸ A fork had appeared in the research road. The ancestry of James and his father John were still the ultimate goal, but the side road following fate of Elizabeth and her daughters was too interesting to resist.

A Genealogical Side-trip

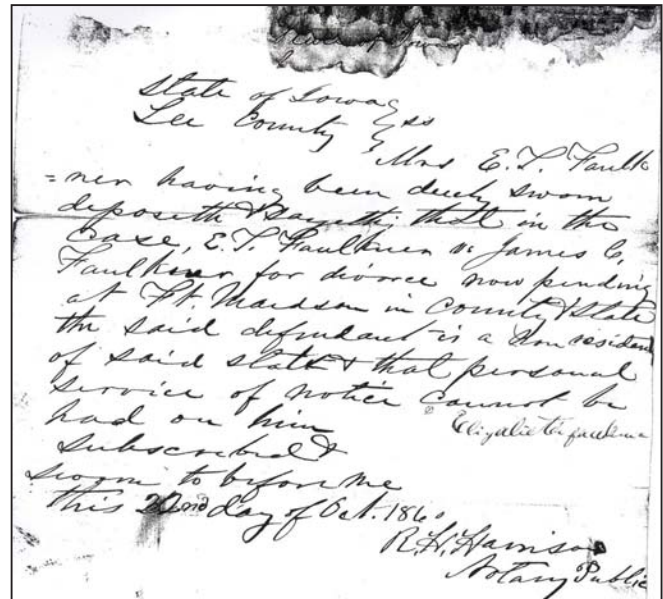
James was easy to follow. He was in Pendleton County, Kentucky, at the time of the 1860 census, living with the John Hand family.¹⁹ His Civil War pension file and compiled military service record tell most of his story. He returned to Indiana, where in April 1861 he enlisted in the 7th Volunteer Regiment for a three-month stint. Something then drew him to Missouri, where he enlisted in the 2nd Missouri Cavalry and met and married Julia Ann Angell in Boone County, Missouri. He returned to the battlefield, was taken prisoner in April 1864 at Camden, Arkansas, and held at Camp Ford, Texas, through February 1865. After returning to his second family at the war's end, he moved them from Missouri to Coles County, Illinois, in the early 1870s. In the 1880s, the family moved a few miles north to Arcola in Douglas County, where he died in 1889.²⁰

That was the main Fawkner research road. But, what happened to James Fawkner's second wife, Elizabeth? Her daughter, Ida, told part of the story when she wrote a short family history more than a half century later. She remembered attending the Indiana Institution for the Deaf in Indianapolis, and stated that her mother, Elizabeth, died 7 March 1870 in Springfield, Illinois, where she was buried in Oak Ridge Cemetery.²¹

A search of Oak Ridge Cemetery interment records found no Elizabeth Fawkner or Elizabeth Stephens, raising new questions about what had happened to her after 1860.²² Ida's account gave no indication of how or why Elizabeth got to Springfield. Nor, did she say anything about her father's 1862 marriage to Julia Angell. Ida obviously wasn't telling the whole story.

Ancestry.com's 1870 U.S. Census index made it easy to find Ida and Josephine. Census manuscripts confirmed that Ida had, in fact, been a student at the Indiana Institution for the Deaf and Dumb.²³ In addition, a young woman closely matching Josephine was found in a home for "erring women" in Springfield, Illinois – yes, she was only 11 years old.²⁴ The 1870 census was taken in June, three months after Ida said the girls' mother had died.

Perhaps there was no Elizabeth Fawkner or Dresser in the Oak Ridge Cemetery records because she had remarried and taken a different name. Indeed, in May 1861, the Lee County Court granted Elizabeth Fawkner a divorce from James C. Fawkner.²⁵ The court record includes allegations that James had deserted Elizabeth in 1858, returned to Montrose briefly, but never lived with her or provided financial support after 1858. When Elizabeth petitioned for divorce, James could not be found.²⁶



Fawkner divorce decree, Lee County, Iowa, 1861.

A month after the divorce decree, Elizabeth married Oliver Dresser in Lee County.²⁷ It was now easy to find Elizabeth in the Springfield cemetery: Elizabeth Dresser, 30, died 7 March 1870 of consumption.²⁸

A nagging question remained: how did Elizabeth get to Springfield? The first clue comes from another account attributed to Ida. She reportedly wrote: "In the autumn of 1863 they [Elizabeth and her daughters] went to the state of Indiana on a visit to Isaac Stephens, Elizabeth's father. In the following year, they located in Indianapolis."²⁹ Oddly, Ida made no mention of Oliver Dresser.

A quick Internet search returned information about Oliver Dresser that is consistent with Ida's statement. Searches of census indexes have not revealed him in the 1860, 1870 or later censuses. No local directories survive for Montrose, and Dresser does not appear in Indianapolis directories between 1860 and 1870. However, IRS tax lists recorded Oliver Dresser as a hotel operator and a liquor dealer in Montrose in 1861, 1862 and 1863.³⁰ He was mayor of Montrose in 1862 and 1863.³¹ He fell off the Iowa tax list in 1864, but reappeared as a liquor dealer in Indianapolis in 1864.³²

Something must have gone wrong over the next five years. Oliver Dresser may have died in Indianapolis between 1864 and 1870, or he might have left Elizabeth in the lurch. Oliver did, in fact, have a bit of a wanderlust history. He may have been the “Dr. Oliver Dresser, who hails from Maine and who was a friend and companion of Pickett’s” who participated in a raid from Montrose to Nauvoo in September 1846.³³ He likely was the Oliver Dresser who appeared at several locations associated with the Mormon migration from Nauvoo to Utah. “Sightings” of Oliver include:

- Oliver Dresser and an apparent wife Eliza lived in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, in 1850; he was 32 years old, a “Loafer,” reportedly born in Maine [possibly Massachusetts].³⁴
- Dr. Oliver Dresser, attempted suicide in the Salt Lake Mormon settlement about September 1850.³⁵
- Oliver Dresser, 32, and Candace Dresser, 25, were enumerated in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, in 1851.³⁶
- Dr. O. Dresser, in a four-member household of one male, three females, one voter and one militia member, lived in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, in 1852.³⁷
- Oliver Dresser, doctor, age 29, b. Providence, Rhode Island, enlisted in Company H, 6th Infantry, U.S. Army, 30 July 1854.³⁸
- Oliver Dresser was serving in the 6th Infantry, U.S. Army in November 1854.³⁹
- Oliver Dresser, corporal, 6th Infantry, Co. H., was at Fort Laramie, Nebraska Territory, in November 1855.⁴⁰
- Oliver Dresser, corporal, 6th Infantry, deserted from the 6th Infantry 3 September, 1856.⁴¹

The reported age for the Oliver Dresser in the Army enlistment records is about five years too young, but geography, chronology and recurrence of the title “Dr.” support the idea that these records all pertain to the same man. Dresser’s movements suggest a connection to the Mormons who moved back and forth along the Mormon Trail during the late 1840s and 1850s.

The nature of Oliver Dresser’s association with the Mormons remains unclear. The Dr. Oliver Dresser involved in the 1846 raid at Nauvoo was very possibly a Mormon returning to skirmish because Nauvoo was in non-Mormon hands by September 1846. His associate Pickett was among some “ruffianly and

turbulent spirits” who occupied Nauvoo after the Mormons departed.⁴² William Pickett was “‘a non-‘Mormon’.”⁴³

Yet, the reported suicide attempt at Salt Lake suggests Dresser had Mormon ties. The wife of the Oliver Dresser in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, was possibly Candace Young. Unverified sources state that she was born 1824 in Schuyler County, New York, and was a niece of Brigham Young. These sources indicate she may have first married John Jewell in Ohio. A daughter Adeline was born in 1845 or 1852, and a daughter Amanda in 1852 or 1854. The same sources say she returned to the Mormon Community of Kirtland, Ohio, where she married Royal William Eddy in 1854.⁴⁴ She reportedly died in Geauga County, Ohio, in 1916. Fuzzy and inconsistent as these sources are, they support some kind of connection between Oliver Dresser and the Mormons who traveled across Iowa on their way to Utah.

An Extension to the Side-trip

While nothing more is known of Oliver, the Dresser family may be the key to understanding why Elizabeth and daughter Josephine ended up in Springfield. Oliver Dresser was probably born about 1819. A nation-wide search for him in the 1870 U.S. Census came up empty, but did locate a single Dresser woman in Springfield, Illinois. Mary Dresser, 62, and born Connecticut, lived with Asahel Stone, 90, and Lucretia Stone, 74. Asahel was born in Massachusetts and Lucretia was born in Connecticut.⁴⁵ Mary Dresser was Lucretia’s sister; she had lived with the Stones for at least 20 years, as indicated by other census data:

- Rebecca Dresser, 74, and Mary Dresser, 42 – both born in Connecticut – lived with Asahel and Lucretia Stone in Springfield in 1850.⁴⁶
- Mary was likely the 52-year old Mary “Defrees” living with the Stones in 1860; this Mary was also born in Connecticut.⁴⁷
- Mary Dresser, 72, born Connecticut, lived with “Lucinda” Stone in 1880; Mary was identified as “sister” of Lucinda.⁴⁸

Mary and Lucretia Dresser of Springfield were possibly first cousins of the Robert Dresser who in 1850 lived in Lee County, Iowa – where Oliver Dresser married Elizabeth (Stephens) Fawcner.⁴⁹ A web-published genealogy states that Lucretia and Mary were daughters of Nathan Dresser, Jr. and Rebecca Leffingwell of Pomfret, Windham County, Connecticut. Nathan Jr. was a son of Nathan Dresser Sr. and Orinda Sessions Carpenter of Pomfret. Nathan Dresser, Jr., had a brother, Comfort Carpenter Dresser who, in turn, had a son Robert Wade Dresser, born 28

May 1814 in Chester, Windsor County, Vermont.⁵⁰

Robert and Fanny Dresser lived in Van Buren Township of Lee County in 1860, 1870 and 1880.⁵¹

Although he does not appear in the Dresser genealogy, Oliver Dresser may have been a brother (or perhaps a cousin) of Robert W. Dresser. In the internet genealogies, Comfort and Celia Dresser's next child was a daughter, Celia, born in 1820, leaving ample time for the birth of Oliver about 1818 or 1819.⁵² This would explain the presence of Oliver Dresser in Lee County, Iowa.

Returning to the Main Road

The few known details of Oliver Dresser's life in Iowa, Utah, Wyoming and Indiana make him a compelling subject in his own right, but he is important to me as part of the story of what happened to James C. Fawkner's second wife Elizabeth and their daughter Ida. Just as I want to learn more about Oliver, researchers of Dresser family history may want to learn more about Ida and her mother Elizabeth.

A side-trip like this may seem a distraction from the main research destination, but this detour off the main road brought into view an interesting new character in the story of the Fawkner family. The picture of Oliver Dresser remains out of focus, but the immediate payoff

is a hypothesis of sorts: Elizabeth Fawkner's marriage to Oliver Dresser is the reason she and her daughter Josephine ended up in Springfield, Illinois. What kind of evidence would help substantiate or debunk the theory? Answers to three questions would help:

- Who were Oliver Dresser's parents? Was he a brother or cousin of Robert Dresser of Lee County, Iowa? A search for Chester, Vermont, records is in order.
- What happened to Oliver Dresser after he moved to Indianapolis? Did he die or move away? Searches to date have produced no records related to a death in Indianapolis.
- What provisions were made in Springfield for the care of Josephine? A preliminary search has not revealed a guardianship record. Do any records of the Ullrich Home for Wayward Women survive?

I've now returned to the main Fawkner research road, but I know interesting genealogical scenery awaits when I have time to revisit the Fawkner-Dresser case. The side-trip to follow Elizabeth after her divorce from James C. Fawkner and her marriage to Oliver Dresser added mystery and color to my research adventure. Genealogical side-trips slow us down, but they can enrich our research experiences in unexpected ways. My advice is: take time for genealogical side-trips.

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 15. Putnam Co., Ind., Clerk of Circuit Court, Marriage Record A, p. 385, Fawkner-Sears, 1848; Family History Library film 1,315,785.
 16. Hendricks Co., Ind., County Clerk, Marriage Book 4, p. 467, Fawkner-Stephens, 1854 FHL film 488,431. A Sears family cemetery, now overgrown with no visible grave markers, had a marker for "Elizabeth Fawkner, 1828-1854." The death of James C. Fawkner's second wife is attested to in affidavit of Elizabeth Morgason taken 16 May 1892 in Douglas County, Illinois. She attested that she was "the sister of James C. Fawkner and that the first wife [Elizabeth Sears] died on or about the 20th of May 1855 that her means of knowing is that she was present and attended the funeral she further declared that said Fawkner never was married to another except the claimant and surviving widow Julia A. Fawkner." James C. Fawkner pension file, claim no. 475,878. Making her statement nearly 40 years after the event, Morgason probably incorrectly remembered the year of Elizabeth Sears Fawkner's death. The 1854 date on the gravestone is consistent with a statement attributed to Ida Fawkner: "In the Spring of 1855 the family [of James Fawkner and Elizabeth Stephens] located in Montrose, Iowa." See email, Ron Buford to author, 3 October 2003, in author's files; the author has not been able to view the original from which Buford quoted.
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Thank You and Congratulations to Harold Hinds



The MGS Education Committee congratulates our friend Harold Hinds as he wraps up his long teaching career in Morris, Minnesota. His short “official” bio tells only the bare essentials:

Harold Hinds, Ph.D., is Distinguished Research Professor of History at the University of Minnesota-Morris, Contributing Editor of *Minnesota Genealogist* and a columnist for the *NGS NewsMagazine*. He is a past-director of the National Genealogical Society board of directors.

Like many of us, Harold got hooked on genealogy a bit later in life. His academic specialty is actually Latin American History. He received his Ph. D. from Vanderbilt University and has taught at Morris since 1970. Over the years, he has taught a wide variety of courses on Latin American history, historiography and world history. In addition, he developed one of the first genealogy and family history courses in the

United States offered as part of a history B.A. program.

Of course, we at MGS know Harold as a genealogist – or as he might prefer, as a personal family historian. Harold encourages genealogists to go beyond accumulating generations of ancestors to capture the texture of their lives. His recent book, *Crafting a Personal Family History*,¹ demonstrates the resourceful use of historical records to paint a picture of ancestors’ lives. He shows the importance of going beyond broad descriptions of historical events to discover the uniqueness of each family.

Harold has been a mentor for thousands of students. With the help of some of those students, including co-author Tina Didreckson, Harold has produced *Town of Wilmington Essex County New York Transcribed Serial Records*, a series of transcriptions of primary-source Wilmington records that will reach 20 volumes when complete. This remarkable project will pay dividends to future researchers.

Professor Hinds has shared his knowledge and enthusiasm for personal family history in dozens of lectures across the Upper Midwest. He is a former MGS Board Member and served on the Board of Directors of the National Genealogical Society. Harold created the MGS Intermediate Genealogy Course when he was Chair of the MGS Education Committee. He has been a *Contributing Editor to Minnesota Genealogist*, and writes a regular column for the *National Genealogical Society Magazine*. In 2009, MGS honored Harold with the MGS Ambassador Award for bringing honor to Minnesota genealogy on the national scene.

Harold and his wife Liz plan to retire in one of his favorite places: Oregon. As they have prepared to move, Harold has donated a large share of his genealogy book collection to the MGS Library and Research Center. He is looking forward to an active life with the Oregon Genealogy Forum.

The Minnesota Genealogical Society thanks Harold E. Hinds for everything he has done for Minnesota genealogy.

Source:

1. Harold E. Hinds, Jr., *Crafting a Personal Family History: A Guide Plus a Case Study—Three Generations of the Hinds Family in New York’s Adirondack Mountains* (Elizabethtown, N.Y.: Essex County Historical Society, 2011).

About Our Authors

Vicki Young Albu is a co-founder of the Dakota County Genealogical Society and currently serves on the boards of MGS, Friends of the Immigration History Research Center, and the Heritage Organization of Romanian Americans in Minnesota (HORA). Vicki holds a degree in History from the University of Minnesota.

J. H. Fonkert, CG, is past-president of the Minnesota Genealogical Society and a professional researcher specializing in Midwest and Dutch genealogy. He has published genealogical research in *The Minnesota Genealogist*, *The Septs* and the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly*.

Gayle Geber, a Minnesota author, has written nonfiction and creative nonfiction family narratives without encountering irresolvable ethical dilemmas – so far. She enjoys researching and writing about her ancestors from Bavaria, Hanover, Alsace, and Luxembourg.

Georgetta “Gigi” Hickey found more time to do genealogy research after retiring from the Internal Revenue Service in January, 2008. While researching her paternal grandmother’s family, she found her 4th great-grandfather had served in the Revolutionary War. She successfully supported an application for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution documenting her ancestor’s patriot service. Gigi is fascinated by her husband’s Irish ancestors, as shown by her research on the Quinn family.

Lois Abromitis Mackin researches Polish, Lithuanian, Cornish, German, Irish, and Scots ancestors in Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut. She holds a doctorate in history from Brown University, chairs the MGS Education Committee, and sits on the MGS Board of Directors. She lives in Plymouth, Minnesota.

Bergetta Monroe began her interest in genealogy began with an assignment from her 9th grade English teacher. She has published two family history books on her family and is working on a third. She teaches publishing classes at MGS or any place willing to sponsor her. She has been very active in various MGS activities and is a current board member.

Cathi Weber has researched family history for more than 30 years, and has special interests in Minnesota research, Family Tree Maker and Ancestry.com. She has researched in more than 10 states and at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Cathi has taught classes for the Anoka County Genealogical Society and is the 2010 winner of the MGS North Star Award.

MGS Branches, Special Interest Groups, and Affiliates

MGS is your gateway to all your ethnic roots. The following MGS Branches and Affiliates make research materials available to MGS, Branch and Affiliate members at the MGS Library and Research Center. Unless otherwise noted, address correspondence to each group at 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul, MN 55075.

MGS BRANCHES

Canadian Genealogical and Heritage Society of Minnesota

www.rootsweb.com/~mncghs

Danish-American Genealogical Society

www.danishgenealogy.org

Germanic Genealogy Society

www.rootsweb.com/~mnggs/GGS.html

Irish Genealogical Society International

www.irishgenealogical.org

Norwegian-American Genealogical Association

www.norwegianamerican.org

Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

www.rootsweb.com/~mnpolgs/pgs-mn

Pommern Regional Group of Minnesota

www.rootsweb.com/~mnprgm/PRG

Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota

www.sgsmn.org

Yankee Genealogical Society

www.mngs.org/yankees

LIBRARY AFFILIATES

Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International

www.cgs.org

Ostfriesen Genealogical Society of America

www.ogsa.us

Scottish-American Center

www.scottishamericancenter.org

MGS MEMBER INTEREST GROUPS

MGS Writing Group

Contact: Kathy Lund (mlund8307@yahoo.com)

Research Study Group

Contact: Jay Fonkert (jfonkert@aol.com) or
Tom Rice (tomkrice@comcast.net)

Beginning Genealogy Group

Contact: Lois Mackin (loismackin@aol.com)

Scottish Genealogy Group

Contact: Bergetta Monroe (bergetta1@q.com)

Low Countries Group (Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands)

Contact: Jay Fonkert (jfonkert@aol.com)

England and Wales Group

Contact: Jay Fonkert (jfonkert@aol.com)

African-American Genealogy Group

Contact: Bergetta Monroe (bergetta1@q.com)



What's Next?

By MGS Education Committee

Naturalization records – declarations of intention (first papers) and petitions for citizenship (second, or final papers) – may provide important genealogical clues, especially after 1906 when most naturalizations took place in federal courts using standardized forms. Because a waiting period was required, first and second papers may have been filed in different locations.

Source: Traill County, North Dakota, District Court, Petition for Citizenship no. 351 (stamped No. 121685, 15 June 1932.

ORIGINAL

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PETITION FOR CITIZENSHIP

No. 351 13

1 To the Honorable the District Court of Traill County at Hillsboro, N. D.

2 The petition of Peter Martin Kolberg hereby filed, respectfully shows:

3 (1) My place of residence is Mayville, North Dakota (2) My occupation is Merchant

4 (3) I was born in Drobak, Norway on Jan. 18, 1890 My race is Scandinavian

5 (4) I declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States on August 16, 1926 in the District Court of Freeborn County at Albert Lea, Minnesota

6 (5) I am married. The name of my wife or husband is Valeria Elizabeth we were married on Feb. 13, 1923 at Minto, North Dakota; he was born at Voss, North Dakota on September 8, 1893; entered the United States at Mayville, Traill County, North Dakota for permanent residence therein, and now resides at Mayville, Traill County, North Dakota I have two children, and the name, date, and place of birth, and place of residence of each of said children are as follows:

7 John Howard, born at Hope, N. D. May 5, 1924, reside at Mayville, N. D.

8 Shirley Marie, born at Albert Lea, Minn. September 5, 1926 and reside at Mayville, N. D.

9 (6) My last foreign residence was Drobak, Norway I emigrated to the United States of America from Liverpool, England

10 was at Boston, Mass. under the name of Peter Martin Kolberg My lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States on August 4th 1902 on the vessel Saxonia as shown by the certificate of my arrival attached hereto.

1. Court of Record. The petitioner probably lived near the court. Other records pertaining to the petitioner may be held in this county.
2. Place of Residence. Locate this town. Search directories or property records.
3. Occupation. Search directories and newspapers to learn about petitioner's business.
4. Birth and Race. Correlate with census information. Use as lead to finding origin.
5. Declaration of Intention. This petitioner declared in Minnesota; look for declaration of intention and compare with information in petition.
6. Wife or husband's name. Verify against other records.
7. Wife or husband's birth information. Try to identify birth family. Look for marriage record.
8. Names, birth and residence of children. Find birth records.
9. Last place of foreign residence. Look for church, civil and emigration records.
10. Arrival in U.S. The petitioner arrived August 1902 at Boston on the Saxonia. Search for passenger arrival records. Find out who was traveling with him.

MGS Horizons - Upcoming Events

Watch for your MGS Minnesota Families newsletter around the first of each month for complete event details or check the MGS Calendar at <www.mnngs.org>.

- January 7** Legacy Software User Group, 9 a.m.
Pommern Regional Group, 1 p.m.
- January 14** Irish Library Day
MGS-Branch Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.
MGS Board of Directors, 1 p.m.
- January 21** Members Morning, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
-Research Study Group
-MGS Writing Group
-Beginning Genealogy Discussion Group
- Topics in Genealogy at MHS, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
- The Internet as a Genealogy Tool
- Think INSIDE the Box – Creative Database Searches
- Swedish Genealogy Society of Minnesota, 1 p.m.
- January 28** Genealogy Computer Lab (class), 10 a.m.
Ostfriesen Genealogical Society of America, 8 a.m.
Yankee Genealogical Society, 1 p.m.
- February 4** Pommern Regional Group of Minnesota, 1 p.m.
- February 11** Irish Library Day
Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International, 11:30 a.m.
- February 18** MGS Library and Research Center Open House
- March 3** Zotero: the Internet Researcher's Swiss Army Knife (class), 10 a.m.
Polish Genealogical Society of Minnesota, 9 a.m.
- March 10** Irish Library Day
MGS-Branch Council meeting, 9:30 a.m.
Topics in Genealogy at MHS, 10 a.m., Minnesota History Center
Finding Female Ancestors
- March 17** Using Newspapers for Family History Research (class), 10:30 a.m.
Swedish Genealogical Society of Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Genealogy 101 (5- part class for beginners), 1 p.m.
- March 24** Genealogy 101 (5-part class for beginners), 1 p.m.
- March 31** Genealogy 101 (5-part class for beginners), 1 p.m., repeats April 14 and 21.



Minnesota Genealogical Society
1185 Concord St. N., Ste. 218
South Saint Paul MN 55075

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Minnesota Genealogical Society

A member of the National Genealogical Society and the Federation of Genealogical Societies

Organized in 1969, the Minnesota Genealogical Society is a nonprofit organization that promotes interest in genealogy and family history, provides genealogical education, and collects genealogical, historical and biographical materials relating to Minnesota families.

Membership: MGS membership is open to anyone interested in genealogy or family history. Members receive free admission to the MGS Library and Research Center, a digital edition of the MGS newsletter *Minnesota Families*, the MGS journal *Minnesota Genealogist*, and discounts for classes and conferences. The Society offers several free learning groups throughout the year. Annual dues are \$35 for individuals and \$45 for families.

Branches and Interest Groups. MGS supports several ethnic and nationality branch organizations and interest groups, including Canadian, German, Polish, Pommern, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Scottish, English-Welch, Low Countries, and Yankee, (New England), as well as a Family History Writing Group and a Research Study Group. In addition, the Irish Genealogical Society International, the Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International and the Ostfriesen Genealogical Society of America maintain their library collections in the MGS Library and Research Center.

Research Policy. Volunteer members of the MGS Research Committee conduct limited research using collections in the MGS Library and Research Center (including Minnesota city directories, Hennepin and Ramsey County marriage records, some Twin Cities area Catholic church records and online genealogy databases). A research fee of \$20 per hour supports operation of the MGS Library and Research Center. Make requests to MGS Research Committee, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul, MN 55075, or research@mngs.org. The Research Committee provide you a list of independent professional researchers, but does not endorse or be responsible for their services.

Book Reviews. Authors and publishers are invited to submit books for reviews by MGS volunteers. Send books to: Managing Editor, Minnesota Genealogist, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul, MN 55075. Please include price and ordering information. All books received will be added to the MGS Library and Research Center reference collection.

Donations. MGS is grateful for donations that support the Society's library and educational programs. The Minnesota Genealogical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization under rules of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and is a registered Minnesota nonprofit corporation.

MGS Office and Library: Suite 218, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul, MN 55075. Exit to Concord St. from either southbound U.S. 52 or from east- or west-bound I-494.

*For schedule information for MTC bus route 71 to MGS,
go to <<http://www.metrotransit.org/maps-schedules.aspx>>*

Send address changes to: MGS Membership, Suite 218, 1185 Concord St. N., South St. Paul 55075